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19th February 1960.

My dear Ron,

It really is a very great distress to me that you and I are so much cut off from one another by the great distance of England to Australia. I cannot even picture your environment, since Adelaide is the only large town in Australia that I have never visited. I was to some extent holding back from writing since I was expecting your return, when I hoped you could have visited Oxford and we could have had ~~the~~ long talk which I would give anything to have with you. Yet the other day I received your Christmas card immediately after my return from the U.S.A., which suggested you had no immediate intention of returning to this country. ~~It~~ ~~is~~ ~~a~~ ~~big~~ ~~thing~~ ~~to~~ ~~say~~, ~~yet~~ it is almost more loss to me than to anyone. I do hope, my dear Ron, that it may not in reality be too long before I see you.

We have got quantities of most exciting results here, and of course you will have seen the various papers which are coming out, such as those of Bernard Kettlewell on his Industrial Melanism and ours on the Maniola work. If there are any that you would like reprints of, do please let me know.

McWhirter is making good progress with his mice and the Mr. David Jones, (a) with his studies of polymorphism on Vicia cracca and (b) on the occurrence of the blood group antibodies and related substances in plants. Robert Creed is hoping to study the polymorphism of the ladybeetle, Adalia, from the point of view of ecological genetics; also the ~~amphipod~~ Crustacean Crangonix.

You will know we have had a big paper out on Maniola jurtina in relation to the Mainland, and a small one in regard to a collection in the north of Scotland. There is a still bigger paper in

Amphipod

press, bringing the work of the Isles of Scilly up to 1958, that should appear in Heredity in the autumn. Dowdeswell has got the most exciting results on breeding Maniola and comparing what happens in bred families with the spot-distributions in the flying population whence they are derived. It is about time that we published the Panaxia dominula results again. The gene-frequency went up a lot in 1957, declined slightly in 1958 and a good deal more in 1959, but it is not as low as it has been. If there are any details in regard to any of this work, mine or others', which you would like to hear about in full, I will send you the information and the data with the greatest possible pleasure, or those that work upon the subject will do so. I am still following my Melitaea colony in the hope of repeating the big fluctuation in numbers. This I have considerable expectation of. It is now down at a very low level.

Of course, as you know, we feel here, and they kindly feel in Liverpool, that the genetic work there is part of that going on in these laboratories. ~~Wright~~ We are in constant touch with Philip Sheppard and Cyril Clarke. I go up to see them four times a year, and they come down to see me about the same amount, and we are ever consulting with one another. You will, I know, have followed with the greatest pleasure what they are doing on the relation of blood groups and disease. Still more, you will have seen with real joy what they have both been able to accomplish in their work on mimicry, for you will by now have read Philip's paper in the new Cold Spring Harbor volume. It seems to me a great achievement. After all, mimicry has been one of the most strongly contested and violently discussed phenomena of evolution and display of selection, and he has completely vindicated the selectionists' hypothesis of it at the point where it has been most contested.

One of the things I particularly want to put to you is this. I am at present engaged in writing a book which I am calling "Ecological Genetics". I am proposing something about 70,000 words, and of course it is a book for serious students, assuming a knowledge of the relevant genetics, ecology and fairly simple statistics which are employed. It is, of course, taking the line which, as you know, has always been dear to my heart; that by picking upon the right sort of situations, it is possible to detect and study evolution going on in nature by a combination of genetic experiment and observation in the field. I propose naturally a fair number of text figures, diagrams and graphs, and a certain number of black and white photographs. Questionless, in regard to some of the material, colour plates would be

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a great advantage, but I am strongly opposed to having them, as I do not want the great cost involved to put up the price of the book unduly. Excepting in the case of such things as mimicry, it does seem to me that the cost of colour plates has now exceeded their value.

Now, my dear Ron, what I particularly want to put to you is this. I wonder if you would consider having a look at the chapters and giving me your opinion on them as they come along? The carbons are, of course, on thinner paper than the top copies, and I do not suppose it will be too expensive to send them out to you by means of the flying machine. Nothing in this world could help me so much, as you will know, as to get your views on what I am doing, especially upon such a matter.

On the archaeological front, our work on the Iron Age in West Cornwall has proved more fortunate than we dared to hope. We have at present almost completed the excavation of a big fougou (artificial cave of the Iron Age). Most of it was choked with earth to within two or three feet of the roof, and one can now stand up in it, for we are down to the original floor level. Considering the main passage is forty feet long and the side passage about sixteen feet long, this has meant a good deal of work for two people. We have got the complete dating by means of pottery, but I believe we are finding here for the first time a structure connected with worship in the Iron Age. We have also obtained in it the first Iron Age sculpture to be found in Britain.

Do let me know what you are engaged upon. It would give me the very greatest pleasure and satisfaction.

It is a great delight to me to be a Fellow of All Souls. I know that when the possibility of electing a scientist to that unique College was agitating, your support was critical for me. How much I owe to you all through my life is a thing I often have in mind. I do so hope for the day when I have that great joy of entertaining you in All Souls.

Yours affectionately,
Henry